

# Food Notes | The Newsletter of Food for People The Food Bank of Humboldt County

## SPRING ISSUE 2020



Food for People partners with local business to cut down on food waste and generate support for our Gleaning Program. More on pg. 4-5.

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- Power Shut-Offs
- More Changes

# Notes from the Director

## With Gratitude ...

By Anne Holcomb, Executive Director

We've been in the habit of doing a "gratitude exercise" at the beginning of our monthly staff meetings over the last few years, taking time to acknowledge the big and little things that other staff, volunteers or community members have done that really helped us in a tight moment, brightened our day, or inspired us. It's an exercise I always enjoy because it shifts our thinking away from being overwhelmed by the challenges and problems that arise and helps us focus on how we work together to find solutions. As we look ahead to 2020, I thought it would be nice to reflect on 2019 from that perspective. We feel blessed that there are so many to thank for our collective achievements so please forgive me if I've overlooked any individual or group!

We'd like to extend our very warmest thanks to:

- All of the donors whose financial contributions help us keep our programs and services running smoothly so that we're able to help when needed most. This includes many individuals who donate regularly as Full Plate Partners, those who give when they can throughout the year, local businesses, foundations and grant funders. Thanks to your support, we are able to pay the utility and insurance bills; purchase fuel and maintain our vehicles; service our refrigeration equipment; purchase food; and so much more.
- The high school students who rallied their friends, families and communities as they participated in the Senator McGuire Humboldt Holiday Food Drive. We were so impressed with their leadership, creativity and commitment to helping those in their community who are dealing with hunger and poverty. We can all be proud that we have such inspired leaders to carry us into the future!
- Everyone who participated as part of a Hunger Fighter Challenge team over the holidays; the children who asked for donations of food for the food bank for their birthdays instead of presents; and all of the individuals, civic groups and families who collected food on our behalf throughout the year.
- The farmers, ranchers and backyard gardeners who grew or raised nutritious local foods to share with the people we serve. This includes our friends at Locally Delicious who created and continue to support the Locally Delicious Food Fund, which contracts with local farmers at the beginning of the season to grow crops specifically for the Food Bank.
- The community and civic groups and the many individuals who raised funds to support our Backpacks for Kids program, which has no dedicated funding source and receives no government support, making it possible for us to provide weekend food packages for children who might



Anne Holcomb,

staff to keep our programs strong over the course of many, many years away from school, work and retirement. Collectively, they donate time staff positions annually!

- Local food-based businesses that donate a million pounds of food annually to USDA commodities and other donors so that we can provide food assistance to people of all ages countywide each year.
- Media partners who help us spread the word on how to access our programs and help.
- Partners within the nonprofit sector who share information and resources to avoid duplication of effort and reach as many as possible. Our partnerships proved especially helpful during the power shutdowns, and will serve us well if disaster hit Humboldt County.

We know that each of you has a role to play about where and how you spend your money. We are grateful when you choose Food for People to bring its own unique set of challenges and we appreciate the opportunity to ensure that our friends and neighbors have the food they need to stay healthy and happy!

With gratitude,

A stylized, handwritten signature in dark ink, likely belonging to Anne Holcomb.





Donate online | [www.foodforpeople.org](http://www.foodforpeople.org)

# Reaching Rural Hunger

## New Distribution Serves Klamath Area

By Carly Robbins, Development Director

Food for People's Mobile Produce Pantry Coordinator, Mike Seeber, travels around Humboldt County in a large refrigerated box truck on a monthly schedule to distribute free produce to rural and remote areas while conducting CalFresh outreach. After hearing from partners and many of the community members served by our Mobile Produce Pantry in Hoopa, Orleans and Weitchpec that folks in the Klamath area were also in need of fresh fruits and vegetables, Mike decided to see if we could help. The Klamath area is designated as a food desert and residents there experience high rates of food insecurity.

Food deserts are areas where residents' access to affordable, healthy food—especially fresh fruits and vegetables—is restricted or nonexistent due to the lack of grocery stores within convenient traveling distance.

Though Klamath, which is located in Del Norte County, is technically out of our service area we wanted to see if we could try something similar. After some coordination with local community and tribal organizations, a special pop-up distribution took place in October. Food for People provided a mix of produce that we purchased thanks to funding provided through a St. Joseph Health's Care for the Poor grant. We were able to provide a variety of staples such as potatoes, onions, carrots, and cabbage and root vegetables like beets and turnips. In one day we saw more than 56 community members come through to access fresh healthy produce—a resounding success.

Due to the success of this distribution and the confirmed need in the Klamath area, Food for People began looking for partnerships in Del Norte County to help sustain these distributions into the future. We are excited to announce that as of January we have partnered with Pacific Pantry, a part of the Community Food Council for Del Norte and Tribal Lands, to establish these as regular distributions which will occur on the third Thursday of every month from 3 to 5 pm at the Klamath Boys & Girls Club, 168 Klamath Blvd. Food for People



Above: Food for People's Mobile Produce Pantry Coordinator, Mike Seeber, travels around Humboldt County in a large refrigerated box truck on a monthly schedule to distribute free produce to rural and remote areas while conducting CalFresh outreach. After hearing from partners and many of the community members served by our Mobile Produce Pantry in Hoopa, Orleans and Weitchpec that folks in the Klamath area were also in need of fresh fruits and vegetables, Mike decided to see if we could help. The Klamath area is designated as a food desert and residents there experience high rates of food insecurity.

nearly doubling the amount of people served at the pilot distribution in October!

Andrea Lancot, the Coordinator with Pacific Pantry shared that this project I work on this year, help with the distribution in Klamath and building relationships with the Tribe is the most important to me. Orleans and worked with the Food for People Extension Program in Klamath, Pacific Pantry and Orleans, I understand the difficulty of accessing resources in these remote areas, especially during the winter months on wet dangerous roads. The ability to access fresh, nutritious food for your family. Many people don't understand the importance of traveling just to access food and services. If this distribution can help ease the burden, especially during the winter, then that's a win.





Local Food Resources Coordinator Allison Kenney arranged the partnership with Humboldt Cider Company to repurpose surplus apples.

# Moving Toward Zero Waste

## New Craft Cider Supports Gleaning Program

By Allison Kenney, Local Food Resources Coordinator

Humboldt County is home to thousands of apple trees, many of which have been here since the days of homesteading, long before the current day generation of cannabis cultivators and organic vegetable farmers. Our gleaning program works to recover fruit excess from local backyard fruit trees and orchards and turn it into viable food sources for our clients. Due to the high volume of local apple trees, and large amount of generous donors who donate to us every year, on good apple years, or years when the fruit trees are exceptionally productive due to favorable growing conditions, we often glean more apples than we can distribute through our different programs and partner meal sites. This growing season was an exceptionally productive one for apple trees in our region, and Food for People's gleaning program brought in over 16,000 pounds of apples!

After attending a gleaning symposium conference in Seattle, and learning about a partnership between Seattle Cider Company and a gleaning organization called City Fruit, I set out to initiate a similar partnership with our very own Humboldt Cider Company. Essentially all of our gleaned apples that are either undesirable for eating—if they have holes or bruises,

sold in their taproom locations, and will come back to Food for People. The funds will in turn be used to benefit our Food Resources programs.

Our Gleaning Program works with local farmers, ranchers, and backyard gardeners to recover surplus vegetables, and meats that might otherwise have a market and distributes them through the Food Bank. These efforts brought in over 16,000 pounds of excess produce and meat last year. Food for People's Local Food Recovery Project partners with grocery stores and food producers to recover surplus food that otherwise goes to waste and distributes it to our clients. The program brings in between 336,000 pounds of food a year, saving local businesses and diverting up to half a million pounds of food from the landfill.

This partnership with Humboldt Cider Company is a creative approach to using fruit surplus to achieve zero waste. It also provides a model for further developing our programs.





Donate online | [www.foodforpeople.org](http://www.foodforpeople.org)

Above: Food for People is made of locally sourced Gravenstein and Honeycrisp apples. Tom Hart, Humboldt Cider Company Owner, empties the barrel. Tom Hart, Kenney, and the Humboldt Cider Company are donating apples for a new Food for People.



# Humboldt Holiday Food Drive

## Senator & Local High School Students Help for the



Thanks to local high school students and Senator Tom Hart and his team, the Humboldt Holiday Food Drive was a success.

As part of a community service project, high school students worked hard this year to collect and donate canned and non-perishable food. Over the year, nearly 22,000 pounds of food, valued at more than \$5,000, was donated. Thanks to the hard work of the high school students and the support of the community, the Humboldt Holiday Food Drive was a success.





## Food for People

The Food Bank for  
Humboldt County

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Coordinator**



**Members of HSU's Brothers United help pack bags of food at our December Second Saturday Volunteer Day.**

## Volunteer with Us!

The rain didn't stop dozens of volunteers from spending the second Saturday of December at our Eureka warehouse, sorting and packing donated holiday food drive items during our monthly Second Saturday Volunteer Day.

After a brief welcome, volunteers got to work unloading boxes and packing food bags for our programs.

Volunteers at the December event included families, high school students and HSU's Brothers United, a cultural club for Black men. Thank you to everyone who braved the rain and helped support our programs — our work wouldn't be possible without you!

Volunteering is a family-friendly way to give back, meet like-minded people and learn more about the work we do at Food for People.

If you are interested in volunteer



**Dozens of volunteers braved the rain to help pack food.**





Donate online | [www.foodforpeople.org](http://www.foodforpeople.org)

Volunteer Senior Delivery Driver Mike helps unpack long-time program participant and friend Mary.

# Power Shut-Offs in Humboldt

## The Impact on Local Seniors

By Heidi McHugh, Community Education & Outreach Coordinator

The mad rush for ice, gasoline, batteries, and shelf-stable food began around 3 p.m. on Oct. 8, 2019. Residents of Humboldt County had received official word that Pacific Gas and Electric would be shutting off the power before midnight as a safety precaution in the face of predicted high winds that could pose a fire danger. That evening lines for gas spilled out for blocks and finding a store with ice was less likely than spotting Bigfoot. The generators that were in stock had sold out before sunset. Some community members were lucky enough to already be prepared for the event and did not have to venture out into the chaos. But others, like some of the older adults served through Food for People's Senior Programs, could not because they are homebound or did not have the resources to purchase emergency supplies.

Without phone or internet, Food for People's staff was limited in our ability to operate on Oct. 9th. We set up distribution in the Eureka Choice Pantry and dealt with the food that was not going to survive the loss of refrigeration. When power and phone service was restored we wanted to check in on our senior and homebound clients to see how they were doing. What we heard was distressing. We heard repeatedly about the cold because furnaces are ignited electrically for many. People with electrical medical equipment were concerned about their health conditions. One woman with a CPAP machine for sleep apnea told me how she had to attempt to sleep upright in her easy chair. The ordeal made her extremely anxious and triggered her Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. One woman told me of her

because what they had was spoiled.

Food for People's Homebound Program relies on volunteer drivers. Mike Vitiello has been delivering food to homebound people for nearly 20 years. He is one of his clients, who is blind and lives alone. He took the initiative and called Mike. His instincts were good; her perishable food was spoiled. He managed to find ice and brought it to her. He found what was salvageable from her refrigerator and helped her get oriented to the new placement of her food. He had more than Mike had available, but if he didn't

"Legitimately, for someone like her, it's a really big deal, both physically and emotionally. Homebound seniors just need some reassurance. We got their back. Just having someone there is an amazing thing in this world." He emphasized that people with disabilities should have what they need. "If someone like her had a general delivery route in the past, but not now, there should be funding to supply the need."

Mike's concerns are shared by many. In response to the impact of the power outage on income, disabled, and elderly people, the Center on Law and Poverty and the Food Banks are educating state lawmakers about those who cannot respond to an emergency. Resources, transportation, or ability to

## Tribute & Memorial Contributions

Honor a friend or family member by making a donation to Food for People. Simply add a memo to your gift. If you include an address, we'll send a card to let them know about the donation. It is a great way to celebrate and/or honor the memory of someone you love.

### In Honor Of

Amanda & Staff at CVS  
Ann Anderson & Susan Hoffman  
Anthony Lucchesi  
Ashley Skiles' Birthday  
Berget Jelane  
Betty Chin & Edie Jenson  
Beverly Ann Hood's Birthday  
Bill Carsner  
Bud & Missy  
The Bundros Family  
Carol Tregenza  
Catherine Sennott  
Carol Vander Meer  
Charles Wilson  
Clarke Wheeler  
Cliff Berkowitz  
Dan Plato  
Dave Mulhern  
David Bray  
Davina Smith  
Dianne Dzur  
Edge Gerring's Birthday  
Emily Mason  
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Erika Makino  
Errol Comma  
Faye & Darman Willard  
Fred Nevers  
HSU Football  
Hugh Scanlon & Sharon Levy

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Roz Sheehy & Rob Roversi  
Ruth & Salvatore Mylie  
Simon Hellyer  
The Sterk Family  
Todd Tregenza  
Tom Davies  
Troy & Ken Dean  
Trudy Keltz  
All the amazing Farmers who participated in the 2019 Grow Off!  
All the staff & volunteers at Food for People" doing the hard work every day"

### In Memory Of

Alice Hackett  
April Conant  
Arnold Souza  
Barbara Williams  
Celeste  
Dale Birdsall  
Dave Etz  
Don Kohl  
Edward Pugh  
Helen Person  
Jacque Kessinger  
Leonard Agnew  
Liz Hamilton  
Marc Jones  
Margaret Cowley  
Mario & Jane Brenta  
Patrick Conlin  
Paul Monahan  
Peggy Douglas  
Ram Dass  
Ray Fisher  
Rebecca Edwards  
Robert James Titus  
Rose Kotarski



## Backpacks Sponsor a Backpack a Child

By Carrie Smith, Child Programs Coordinator

As Food for People's Child Programs Coordinator for the past six years, I have been able to supply food to children who are in our community. It's an unfortunate reality that many children who depend on school meals for their daily food intake. The Backpacks for Kids program supplies weekend food bags to kids who may not get enough to eat to

The Backpacks for Kids Program works with school personnel to identify children who are at risk of going hungry over the weekend. During the school year, participating students receive kid-friendly meals and snacks including bread, fruit, peanut butter, tuna, so granola bars and 100% fruit juice. The food is determined by availability, USDA guidelines, and parents' and children's expressed needs.

Last year, we served nearly 10,000 meals over the school year, and plan to reach even more this year. We serve children at sites in Lake, Ferndale, Hoopa, Samoa, Arden, Hydesville, Carlotta, Rio Dell, and others. Some of the thoughts from the children who participated in last year's program were: "I like the [food bag] because it has food and we never know when we might not have food" and "Sometimes we're out of food on the weekends."

Children are our future and their proper nutrition they need to learn and grow. In turn, will grow to be productive and have a better understanding and appreciation of the world around them.



# Advocacy Corner

## SNAP Changes Affect the Poorest Americans

By Heidi McHugh, Community Education & Outreach Coordinator

On December 4, 2019 the federal government issued a rule in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or CalFresh) that will cut off food assistance for nearly 700,000 of the nation's poorest adults. Those affected are referred to as able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWD). An ABAWD is a SNAP participant age 18 through 49 with no minor children in the household. These adults are among the poorest in the nation, according to U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) data. Their average income is just 18% of the federal poverty line. Their average monthly SNAP benefits are about \$165 per month. Most working-age adults on SNAP who can work, do so. Unfortunately, low-paying jobs with unreliable hours and little to no benefits are all too common. At the time of the announcement, the Humboldt County Department of Health and Human Services estimated that 3,606 Humboldt County residents who receive benefits through the program may be impacted by the change.

A longstanding provision of SNAP limits an ABAWD to just three months of benefits over the course of three years, if they are not employed for at least 20 hours a week. A provision of the law also allows states to seek waivers of this three-month cut-off for areas where insufficient jobs are available. From the rule's enactment in 1996 until now, both Democratic and Republican presidents alike have operated under a common set of criteria in granting these waivers. This provision allows states to respond to high unemployment and economic uncertainty caused by recessions, events such as natural disasters, and regional shifts in employment opportunities.

Thirty-six states currently have waivers for parts of their states where unemployment is highest. All of California was under waiver until September 1, 2018. The rule issued on December 4th will dramatically reduce states' ability to be eligible for these waivers.

The enforcement of the ABAWD rule does not improve the circumstances of the impacted individuals. Research has shown that work requirements have resulted in little or no long-term increase in earnings and employment and have caused many families to lose assistance, leaving them in deep poverty.

Andrew Cheyne, director of government affairs for the California Association of Food Banks says of the rule, "It's grounded in the myth that people receiving food assistance are 'lazy' and don't want to work. Nothing could be further from the truth: the people impacted by this rule have been systematically disenfranchised and face real barriers to maintaining and documenting full-time employment. Taking away basic food assistance only makes people hungry, and does not help anyone find a job."

More than half of SNAP households with at least one working-age, non-disabled adult work while receiving SNAP. Because people often participate in SNAP when they are

between jobs, work rates are high. More than 80% of SNAP households are employed in the year or the year after receiving SNAP.

The mandate to work 20 hours a week to be SNAP eligible does not take into account that many workers often juggle irregular work schedules, making it difficult for them to become ineligible. Several respondents to Food for People's & Pantry Services Survey 2018 reported barriers in rural communities that make employment challenging. Some respondents reported having sporadic or rare transportation to work. Similarly, 28% of respondents reported having sporadic or rare transportation. This is important because on paper, they may be an ABAWD, but they may have a medical condition or disability that may prevent them from working.

*"It's grounded in the myth that people receiving food assistance are 'lazy' and don't want to work. Nothing could be further from the truth: the people impacted by this rule have been systematically disenfranchised and face real barriers to maintaining and documenting full-time employment. Taking away basic food assistance only makes people hungry, and does not help anyone find a job."*

The shortage of healthcare in Humboldt County contributes to the difficulty of finding work. ABAWDs are limited in their ability to work if they are caregivers for ill family members or have young children.

This new amplification of the rule adds to the administrative burdens and raises the costs for state and county agencies. Furthermore, these new changes will make it more difficult for the SNAP program to respond to emergencies and disasters. Most of the country's economic downturn during and after the Great Recession was due to participants who can work, do work, but are not working by a charitable food organization (Feeding America).

Organizations like Food for People are working to fill this meal gap. Take-home meals for those who are in between jobs, caring for someone with undiagnosed disabilities while looking for employment, but it will increase the risk of diet-related illness.



# A Culinary Trip To Italy

## Nutrition Education

By Kayla Watkins



Recently our clients had the opportunity to experience the food culture of Italy via volunteer Chef Anne Harris and her husband Mark Harris in Food for People's Cooking with Commodities class. This dynamic duo recently traveled to Italy to expand their culinary skills as well as enrich their food culture. They were excited to share the experience of homemade traditional pasta making with our class.

This enriching tradition has intrigued and changed the way our clients view and eat pasta. We completed the meal with a beautiful array of vegetables for pasta primavera and accompanied it with a rainbow of fruits jazzed up with a caramelized orange sauce (recipe below).

Look for upcoming cooking classes on our Facebook page at [facebook.com/FoodforPeopleInc](https://facebook.com/FoodforPeopleInc).



Anne and Mark Harris demonstrate homemade pasta in a recent Cooking with Commodities class.

## CARMELIZED ORANGE SAUCE

### Directions:

1. Zest the oranges into thin, long strips.
2. Boil the water, add the zest and continue to boil for 3 minutes. Drain the zest in a strainer, rinse with cold water and set aside.
3. Melt the butter in a saucepan over medium heat. Using a wooden spatula, stir in about 1/3 of the orange juice and the sugar. Continue to cook over medium heat adding a small amount of juice to prevent crystallization.
4. Once the sugar is dissolved, turn the heat to medium high, and stir occasionally until the mixture turns golden amber.
5. When the sugar mixture is golden amber, add the zest and continue cooking for a

### Ingredients:

3 large oranges  
with juice

1/4 stick butter

1/3 cup sugar

2-3 cups water



# 2019 Hunger Fighter Champ



## 2019 Hunger Fighter Teams

Beneficial Living Center  
Changing Tides Family Services  
City of Arcata  
Compass Community Credit Union  
Department of Health & Human Services -  
Healthy Communities  
Department of Health & Human Services -

Department of Rehabilitation  
Emerald Family Farms  
GHD  
Glen Paul School  
The Heart of Humboldt  
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**Thank you to everyone who joined us to fight local hunger and help  
2019 Holiday Food & Fund Drive a success!**

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